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Southern RR proposes plan to D. C.

Trash rail haul studied

By MARY LEIMBACH

District officials said yesterday they will "seriously consider" an offer from the Southern Railway to bid on a municipal waste disposal system which would bale trash and haul it by rail to Nelson County, Va., 100 miles from Washington.

Norman Jackson, Sanitary Engineering chief, said the District would have to solicit bids from other railroads with lines thru Washington before reaching any decision. Altho Southern's proposal has been under study for more than two years, Mr. Jackson said it would have to be studied for "reliability," to see if the railway could actually remove as much as 1,500 tons of trash a day from the District. Trash in the District usually amounts to about 2,200 tons daily, most of it in paper and plastics.

Currently, the District burns much of its trash in four incinerators and also uses a sanitary landfill on U. S. Park Service land in Prince George's County. Funds have been appropriated to build a fifth incinerator.

Southern has spent \$100,000 planning its municipal system,

James H. Nutter Jr., head of Waste Division Activities, said. The company would own and operate the receiving and processing plant and the landfill it intended to use.

One of the advantages is the system, unlike burning, produces no air pollution, Mr. Nutter said. Another even more important feature is that the system calls for no capital outlay from the area it serves, and while the system is by no means cheap, it is cheaper than that presently used by the District, he said.

Southern's plan calls for the processing and bailing of trash into 1 ton blocks. They wouldn't look, or smell, like garbage, Mr. Nutter promised. In fact, he said, only about 12 per cent of trash collected in the District is garbage.

SPECIAL FLATCARS

The bales would be loaded onto specially designed flatcars 100 feet long. Each car would carry about 100 tons of baled trash. Southern would have to build about 15 such cars, backed up by 30 more cars for servicing the special flatcars. In addition, the rail-

way would also have to build the processing plant. This would take about two years — the same amount of time it will take the District to use up its present landfill site.

The plant Southern wants to build could shred almost anything that came to it, even automobiles, Mr. Nutter said. But the railway isn't figuring this into the cost of operation because automobiles generally go to Baltimore scrap metal yards.

The price of the operation was not disclosed, but Mr. Jackson called it "competitive." Mr. Nutter claimed that the current cost of trash disposal was second only to the cost of public education. "There ought to be a better way to spend the taxpayer's money," he said.

If the District doesn't want the plan, Southern won't be discouraged. Already 12 cities along its lines have inquired

about getting the service. "We thought we'd try the District first," Mr. Nutter said. "We expect their trash problem to triple over the next 10 years."

*Normal flat-car
length is 40 to 60 ft
depending on railroad.*